



**National Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, during General Debate Agenda Item 9, at 48<sup>th</sup> session of Human Rights Council**

**05 October 2021**

**Madam President,**

We align ourselves with OIC statement and echo concerns related to disturbing trends of racism and racial discrimination across the globe, even after two decades of DDPA.

Combating hate speech, xenophobia, stigmatization and incitement to violence are a shared responsibility and collective endeavor. However, we are witnessing dangerous manifestations of discrimination, intolerance and violence against people on the basis of their race, colour, ethnicity or religion.

The gap between words and actions must be bridged to counter these negative developments and to create a conducive environment for the enjoyment of human rights by all without any discrimination.

We are deeply concerned over racially motivated attacks, stigmatization and disenfranchisement of minorities, often tolerated or sponsored by some States to secure electoral gains, perpetuate foreign occupation and impose a majoritarian agenda. In some cases, state sanctioned disinformation campaigns have been launched to de-humanize and delegitimize entire communities.

Islamophobia is a dangerous form of contemporary racism, nurtured by decades of public rhetoric and policies against as well as stereotyping of Muslim communities and minorities. It has been amplified by right wing groups and political parties, instrumentalized through social media platforms and normalized in some cases by sections of mainstream media.

The most visible and consequential examples of this phenomenon are evident through the steady rise of extremist right-wing Hindutva ideology in our region that has targeted Muslims, Christians and Dalits among others through communal violence, deprivation of citizenship, attacks on religious sites, forced conversions, and prohibition of religious practices. Violent attacks have resulted in the loss of life, limbs and private properties. Many of the perpetrators of these crimes enjoy state patronage and protection, reinforcing a growing culture of impunity.

The people under foreign occupation are most vulnerable to multiple forms of discrimination. These disturbing trends are most vivid in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir where the neo-colonialist regime is changing the demographic structure by converting Muslim majority into a minority and effacing their distinct cultural and religious identity, in clear violation and defiance of international law.

This Council and the international community at large must redouble efforts to halt and reverse these dangerous developments through speaking out against these modern forms of racial discrimination, ensuring meaningful accountability of the perpetrators and insisting on full compliance of concerned states with their respective obligations under international law. I thank you.